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The Tuberculin Test
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THE Tuberculin TEST its IMPORTANCE To YOU

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

WHAT IS THE TEST? HOW IS IT GIVEN?

The Mantoux or tuberculin test is a simple, harmless way of finding out whether or not tuberculosis germs have ever entered your body. It is given by injecting a small amount of clear fluid called tuberculin between the layers of the skin, usually on the forearm.

WHEN, HOW IS IT READ?

From 48 to 72 hours after the test is given, a physician or a nurse will examine the spot where the test was made, and measure the size of the reaction if one is present. . Most of the reactions are very small. If there is no swelling, the test is negative, you are a non-reactor. If the swelling reaches or exceeds a certain size, it is positive and you are a reactor.

SUCH ENTRY DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN
THE DISEASE HAS GAINED A FOOTHOLD

WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Most people who react to the test also will react to future tests. They should not be skin-tested again unless their doctors specifically recommend it. If you have a positive reaction you should have an x-ray at least once a year.

WHAT ABOUT FAMILIES AND CLOSE ASSOCIATES OF REACTORS?

They too, should be examined by their family doctors because a positive tuberculin test means that the reactor has been in contact with an active case of TB. Examinations of contacts often reveals a person with the disease, who unknowingly has been spreading tuberculosis germs. The exposure can be stopped, and the sick person can benefit from treatment. The earlier TB is diagnosed and treated, the more certain is recovery.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

A positive reaction means that at some time TB germs have entered your body; it would not show whether or not you have been actually harmed by the germ or have successfully resisted it.

HOW CAN THE REACTOR LEARN WHETHER THE GERMS HAVE HARMED HIM?

Each reactor should consult his family physician who may take a chest x-ray to learn whether he has any signs of TB or may refer him to the local TB clinic for examination. Most reactors are strong enough to resist this first exposure to the germ, but if the x-ray reveals the need for further study or treatment, you should follow all of your doctor's recommendations promptly.

always remember!

If your tuberculin test is negative

CONTINUE TO BE TESTED PERIODICALLY

If your tuberculin test is positive

BE X-RAYED PROMPTLY AND PERIODICALLY THEREAFTER